



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH

FOR THE

Borough of Bridgwater

for the Year ending

31st December, 1938

BY

G. W. HARVEY BIRD,

M.A., M.B., B.CH., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Bridgwater :
Bigwood & Staple, Printers,
York Buildings.



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BOROUGH OF BRIDGWATER.

Mayor: Mr. Councillor L. H. PALMER, J.P.

HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Chairman : Mr. Alderman W. Deacon, J.P.

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Councillor W. O. Coate.

Mr. Alderman Bryer, C.C. Mr. Councillor Luckes.

Mr. Alderman Reed, J.P., C.C. Mr. Councillor Pitman.

Mr. Councillor Farthing, J.P. Mr. Councillor Scholfield.

Mr. Councillor Gray. Mrs. Councillor Reed.

 Mr. Councillor Wall.

HOUSING & TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE.

Chairman: Mr. Councillor R. Chamberlin.

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Councillor W. W. Broomfield.

Mr. Alderman Ashton. Mr. Councillor Coate.

Mr. Alderman Berry, M.B.E., J.P. Mr. Councillor Chard, J.P.

Mr. Alderman Bryer, C.C. Mr. Councillor Luckes.

Mr. Councillor Allen. Mr. Councillor Pitman.

Mr. Councillor Boltz, J.P. Mr. Councillor Washer.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health. G. W. Harvey Bird, M.A., M.B., B.Ch..
M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Chief Sanitary Inspector. R. K. Lean, A.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.,

Additional Sanitary
Inspector. Ronald F. Shapter, C.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

Clerk. Nigel C. M. Pitman.

Disinfector. H. Howell.

A contribution is made from the Exchequer in respect of the salaries of the Medical Officer of Health and the Sanitary Inspectors.

ANNUAL REPORT 1938.

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS,

BRIDGWATER,

MAY, 1939.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Bridgwater.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1938.

Vital Statistics. The birth rate has not quite kept up the improvement of the previous year, but the death rate is the lowest for many years.

Infectious Diseases. The figures again show a marked improvement and are most satisfactory.

Only two cases of Diphtheria were notified, and the Scarlet Fever notifications fell from 21 in 1937 to 2 in 1938. Cases of Pneumonia, however, rose from 19 to 43 owing to the prevalence of Influenza.

It is regrettable that more advantage has not been taken of the County Council Scheme for the immunisation against Diphtheria of children of pre-school age. Only 2 children were so treated during the year.

I would appeal to parents and guardians to protect their children by this simple and safe method.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

G. W. HARVEY BIRD,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS.

Area (acres) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,893
Population, Census 1931 .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	17,139
Population, estimated mid-year, 1938 .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	18,330
Estimated number of inhabited houses .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	5,350
Rateable Value .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	£114,000
Sum represented by a penny rate .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	£435
Total Births:—	M. 162	F. 142	Birth Rate	.....	16.07
Live Births :—					
Legitimate	M. 141	F. 135	Birth Rate	.....	15.09
Illegitimate	M. 7	F. 5	Birth Rate	.....	0.66
Still Births :—					
Legitimate	M. 14	F. 2	Birth Rate	.....	0.87
Illegitimate	M. —	F. —	Birth Rate	.....	—
Deaths :—	M. 108	F. 111	Death Rate	.....	11.43
			Standardised	.....	10.05
Number of women dying, in or in consequence of childbirth :—					
From Sepsis .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2
From other causes .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Nil
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age per 1,000 live births .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	52.08
Legitimate 45.10	.....	.....	Illegitimate 6.94	.....	.....
Deaths from Cancer (all ages) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	21
Deaths from Measles (all ages) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Nil
Case rate of Infectious Diseases per 1,000 living :—					

Bridgwater England & Wales

Scarlet Fever .....	.....	0.11	0.01
Diphtheria .....	.....	0.11	0.07
Enteric Fever .....	.....	—	0.03
Pneumonia .....	.....	2.35	1.10
Tuberculosis .....	.....	1.64	—
Erysipelas .....	.....	0.16	0.40

FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

Death Rate .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	11.6
Birth Rate (Live Births) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	15.1
Birth Rate (Still Births) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0.60
Infant Mortality per 1,000 .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	53.0

VITAL STATISTICS 1928-37.

	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
Population	16,730	16,960	17,140	17,420	18,000	17,950	17,840	17,950	18,080	18,330
Birth Rate	16.43	16.55	17.91	18.43	15.33	16.88	14.13	15.87	18.03	16.07
Death Rate (crude)	13.36	12.61	13.89	12.11	12.14	12.12	13.17	12.71	14.33	11.43
Infant Mortality Rate	54.9	44.4	87.9	39.3	66.14	46.20	39.68	63.16	24.54	52.08

During the year an extension of the Borough Boundaries was completed by the addition of parts of Bridgwater Without.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The chief industries of the town are:—Brick and Tile making, Engineering, Wicker Work, Shirt and Collar making, and the manufacture of "Cellophane."

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Hospitals provided or subsidized by the Local Authority or County Council.

- A. (1) **Fever.** The Borough Isolation Hospital having been closed, cases of Infectious Diseases are now isolated at the Cross Isolation Hospital under the County Council.
- (2) **Small Pox.** The Somerset County Council has provided a Hospital at Bawdrip, 4 miles from Bridgwater, which is available for the isolation of cases arising in this area.
- B. (1) **Tuberculosis.** The Somerset County Council provide Sanatorium accommodation for this area.
- (2) **Maternity.** The Mary Stanley Home and District Nursing Association at 6 and 8 Castle Street, have 17 Maternity beds, 1 Labour bed, and 1 Isolation bed.

The Drummuir Nursing Home at Northfields, provides maternity accommodation.

(3) **Children.** The General Hospital has a Children's Ward, with 13 beds, and the Mary Stanley Home 7 cots for infants.

(4) **Other.** The Bridgwater General Hospital has accommodation of 72 beds and special departments for Massage, X-ray and Electrical treatment. Arrangements have been recently made under which Consultants from the Bristol Teachings Schools attend monthly and when required (Physician, Surgeon, Oculist, Gynæcologist and Dermatologist).

No financial support is given by the Local Authority to these Hospitals.

The Public Assistance Institution Infirmary, which serves the old Union area of 40 Parishes, including Bridgwater and Langport, has 80 beds, including 5 Maternity, and a bungalow of 2 beds for Tuberculosis cases.

There is no special institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children in the area other than that provided by the Public Assistance Institution.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

- A. **Infectious Diseases.** Cases are conveyed to the Cross Isolation Hospital by the Hospital's Motor Ambulance and our horse-drawn Ambulance is now used for conveying bedding, etc., for disinfection.
- B. **Non-Infectious Diseases.** Two Motor Ambulances in the charge of a unit of the St. John Ambulance Brigade are available for accidents and non-infectious illnesses.

CLINICS and TREATMENT CENTRES.

	Held at	Time
Maternity and Child Welfare	Health Centre,	Fridays, 2 to 5 Mount St.
Day Nurseries	nil	
Orthopædic Minor Clinic	Health Centre, Mount St.	1st and 3rd Thurs. each month
Tuberculosis Clinic	Health Centre, Mount St.	Weds. 9.30 to 1
Venereal Disease Clinic	Health Centre, Mount St.	Weds. 1 to 6

The above are provided by the Somerset County Council.

School Clinic. This is provided by the Local Education Authority, and is held every morning at 9.30 a.m. The School Medical Officer attends on Tuesdays and Fridays at 9.30 a.m. The School Dentist attends on Thursdays and Fridays and the County Oculist as required.

The Clinic is available for Elementary School Children.

PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

(A). General. This is done chiefly by the Bridgwater and District Nursing Association, who have 12 nurses available.

Number of cases attended during 1938.

Medical 207. Surgical 87. No. of visits paid 12,497.

Operations 13.

Number of cases confined during 1938.

In the Home	Midwives 134	Doctors 43
On the district	Midwives 165	Doctors 33

(B). Infectious Diseases. The Local Authority has not provided any nurses or made any financial contribution towards home nursing during the year. Ophthalmia Neonatorum is now treated when necessary by the Somerset County Council, and the Local Authority has sanctioned the provision of home nursing for certain other diseases should such be necessary.

Chemical Work. Material for analysis is submitted in the case of Food and Drugs to the Borough Analyst at the Western Counties Laboratories, Bristol, while pathological and bacteriological specimens are submitted to the Somerset County Laboratories at Taunton. The results of the various examinations are given under their respective headings.

SPECIAL ACTS, BYELAWS and REGULATIONS IN FORCE.

Byelaws and Regulations.

Port and Navigation, 1867.

Loading and Unloading of Explosives within jurisdiction of Harbour Authority, 1877.

Port and Navigation (Petroleum), 1894.

School Attendance, 1904.

Control of Dogs during Night, 1927.

Preventing the waste, etc., of Water, 1929.

Quantock Road Cemetery, 1929.

Leading or Driving of Animals through streets of Borough, 1929

Pleasure Grounds, 1929.

Market, 1930.

Employment of Children and Street Trading, 1934.

Sheep Regulations, 1931.

Employment of Children and Young Persons and Street Trading, 1934 and 1935.

Houses Let in Lodgings, 1934.

New Streets and Buildings, 1926 and 1931.

Adoptive Acts.

- The Lighting and Watching Act, 1833.
- The Burial Acts, 1852-1906.
- The Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890.
- The Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890
- The Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907.
- Part II., Sec. 19; Sec. 95; Part VI., Part VII.
- The Public Libraries Acts, 1892-1919.
- The Private Street Works Act, 1892.
- The Small Dwellings Acquisition Acts, 1899-1923.
- The Local Government and Other Officers Superannuation Act, 1922.
- The Public Health Act, 1925.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water. The work on the new 210 million gallon reservoir at Durleigh was completed during the year.

Mains were extended to include the Hamp Housing Estate and Chilton Trinity.

Samples of the town's water have been submitted to the County Analyst monthly and his reports have been uniformly favourable.

The Rural District Council continue to receive a supply from the Corporation as required.

Drainage and Sewerage. An electrically operated pumping station was installed at Bristol Road. New sewer laid for carpet factory and Bristol Road houses in addition to sewers for 146 houses at Hamp.

Closet Accommodation. The whole of the houses in the area are supplied with water closets with the exception of eight cottages which are provided with pail closets.

Refuse Collection. This work is carried out by the Surveyor's department. House refuse being collected weekly and trade refuse as required, in some cases daily.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area. The records given by the Chief Sanitary Inspector at the end of the report will show the number of insanitary conditions dealt with.

Shops. Particulars of action taken is given in the Chief Sanitary Inspector's Report.

Camping Sites. There are no camping sites within the Borough.

Smoke Abatement. There were no complaints during the year.

Swimming Baths. The Corporation Swimming Baths are situated in Old Taunton Road and comprise two open Baths, the larger 100 ft. by 35 ft. and the smaller 60 ft. by 25 ft. The water is drawn from the town supply and is chlorinated at the source. The water is changed and treated with an antiseptic preparation twice weekly.

Eradication of Bed Bugs. This matter is dealt with in the Chief Sanitary Inspector's report.

PREMISES & OCCUPATIONS WHICH ARE CONTROLLED BY BYELAWS OR REGULATIONS.

Cowsheds, Dairies and Milkshops .....	.....	.....	48
Meat Purveyors .....	.....	.....	29
Slaughterhouses .....	.....	.....	15
Common Lodging Houses .....	.....	.....	3

RATS.

The administration of the Rat and Mice (Destruction) Act was delegated to the Local Authority by the County Council in 1926 and many complaints have been dealt with. Public notice of Rat Week was given by inserting a notice in the Press, and action was taken by occupiers, and requests for advice were received by the Rats Officer, who co-operated in the destruction.

RAG FLOCK ACTS, 1911 & 1928.

There are no premises in the Borough in which rag flock is manufactured.

SCHOOLS.

These are all provided with Corporation water and water closets. The scheme for the re-organisation of the schools in the Borough is in hand, extensive alterations having been carried out to the Albert Street Council School, whilst new sanitary conveniences have been provided at the St. John's Parochial School.

No schools were closed during the year.

HOUSING.

	Number of new houses erected during the year :—	
(a)	Total (including numbers given separately under (b))	348
(b)	With State assistance under the Housing Acts :—	
	i By the Local Authority	70
	ii By other bodies or persons	—
1.	Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year.	
(1)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health and Housing Acts)	281
	Number of Inspections made for the purpose	759
(2)	Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidation Act, 1925	92
	Number of inspections made for the purpose	323
(3)	Number of dwelling houses, found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	8
(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	237
2.	Remedy of Defects without service of formal notice.	
(a)	Number of defective houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	244
(b)	Number of houses demolished voluntarily or in consequence of informal action	1
3.	Action under Statutory Powers during the Year.	
(A.)	Proceedings under Sections, 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.	
(1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	—
(2)	Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notice :—	
	(a) By Owner	5
	(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	—

(B.)	Proceedings under Public Health Acts.	
(1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	5
(2)	Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:- (a) By Owners (b) By Local Authority in default of owners	5 —
(C.)	Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936	—
(1)	Number of houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	5
(2)	Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	16
(D.)	Proceedings under Section 12 of Housing Act, 1936.	
(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	—
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	—

Housing Act, 1936—Overcrowding.

(a) i	Number of dwelling houses overcrowded at end of the year	18
ii	Number of families dwelling therein	18
iii	Number of persons dwelling therein	141
(b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	18
(c) (i)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	83
(ii)	Number of persons concerned in such cases	639
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for abatement of overcrowding	—

4. Houses Owned by Local Authority.

(A.)	Total number of houses owned by the Council and erected or acquired under Part 3 of Housing Act, 1925	1099
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INSPECTION & SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(A.) **Milk Supply.** All cowsheds have been regularly visited at milking times to see that due precautions are taken to produce clean and wholesome milk. The milkshops and stores are also regularly inspected to see that all milk is properly stored and the utensils kept in a cleanly condition.

Accredited, Tuberculin Tested and Pasteurised milk is sold in the area by Retailers licensed by the Council, and samples are taken in accordance with the Milk and Dairies (Special Designations) Order, 1936.

None of the 40 samples of milk submitted to the Public Analyst contained preservative.

(B). **Meat, Etc.** There are 15 slaughterhouses in the Borough, 10 of which are "Registered" and 5 are "Licensed."

Arrangements are in force for the inspection of all meat killed either at the time or immediately afterwards.

All Shops, Stalls, etc., are kept under supervision.

The amount of food found to be diseased or unfit is tabulated at the end of the report.

(C). **Adulterations, Etc.** The number of samples taken under the Food and Drugs Acts, and Milk and Cream Regulations are given at the end of the Report with the results. There were nine cases of adulteration during the year.

(D). **Shellfish.** There are no layings in the neighbourhood and very little shellfish sold in the Borough.

PREVALENCE and CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Pneumonia and Tuberculosis accounted for the majority of cases notified. Pneumonia was prevalent during April, May and June.

Diphtheria anti-toxin is available free in necessitous cases.

Both cases of Scarlet Fever notified and one case of diphtheria were isolated in the Cross Isolation Hospital. In each case, after removal of the patient, the rooms used were disinfected by spraying with a solution of Izal and by fumigation, and the clothing and bedding treated at the Steam Disinfecting Station.

The Authority is co-operating with the County Council in its scheme for the immunisation of children under school age against diphtheria by general practitioners. The "Wellcome" brand Diphtheria prophylactic A.P.T. is the material used.

No scheme for the immunisation of school children is at present in operation in the Borough.

The number of pre-school children immunised during the year was 2.

No vaccinations or re-vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health under P.H. (Small-pox) Regulations 1917.

The intimations of illness or disease received at schools are handed to the School Nurse, who visits the homes, and if any infectious disease is suspected, steps are taken to ensure that medical attention is obtained.

Cancer. Cases are treated at the Bridgwater General Hospital and, where necessary, are transferred to the Bristol General Hospital or Bristol Royal Infirmary where Radium and X-Ray Therapy treatment is available.

DISEASES NOTIFIED DURING 1938.

Disease	Total cases notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Diphtheria	2	1	-
Scarlet Fever	2	2	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	9	1	-
Pneumonia	43	-	8
Erysipelas	3	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	3	-	-
Encephalitis Lethargica	1	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	1	-

AGE OF CASES NOTIFIED.

Age—	0.1	1	2	3	4	5	10	15	25	35	45	55	65	75
Diphtheria	1	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Scarlet Fever	1	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Pneumonia	1	....	1	.....	.....	7	....	1	5	6	9	7	3
Puerperal Pyrexia	3	4	2	.....	.....	.....
Erysipelas	1	....	1	1	.....	.....	.....
Ophthalmia
Neonatorum	3	....	....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Encephalitis	1	.....	.....	.....	.....
Lethargica	1	.....	.....	.....	.....
Acute	1	.....	.....	.....
Poliomyelitis	1	.....	.....	.....

MONTHLY INCIDENCE.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Diphtheria	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1
Scarlet Fever	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1
Pneumonia	1	3	5	10	9	6	4	1	1	1	2
Erysipelas	1	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	1	.....	2	.....	.....	1	1	.....	2
Ophthalmia	1	.....	1	.....	.....
Neonatorum	1	.....	1	.....	.....
Encephalitis	1	.....	1	.....	.....
Lethargica	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Acute	1	.....	.....
Poliomyelitis	1	.....	.....	.....

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936, Section 172.

There has been no need to use the powers of this section during the year.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES 1929-38.

		1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
Cerebro Spinal Fever	-	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Diphtheria	-	7	17	1	3	2	3	...	10	2	2
Dysentery	-	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas	-	2	2	2	4	5	5	8	3	3	3
Enteric Fever	-	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Encephalitis Lethargica	-	...	...	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-	...	3	2	2	3	1	...	1	1	3
Pneumonia	-	41	18	29	32	31	19	22	13	19	43
Polio- Encephalitis	-	...	...	...	1	...	..	..	..	..	..
Poliomyelitis	-	...	...	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Post Vaccinal Encephalitis	-	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Puerperal Fever	-	..	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	1	9
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	1	8	3	1	..	6	2	2	1	
Scarlet Fever	-	2	39	25	6	15	14	19	32	21	2
Small Pox	-	...	...	...	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tuberculosis	-	51	46	34	33	20	28	29	34	28	30
Totals	-	106	134	97	83	77	77	81	96	78	94

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

CASES	TREATED				Total	Blindn'ss	Deaths
	Notified	At home	In Hospital	Vision un-impaired			
3		2	1	3	.....	.....	.....

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases Notified and Mortality during 1938.

Age Periods	New CASES				DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—1	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....
1—5	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....
5—10	....	3	1	1	....	1	....	1
10—15	1	2	1	....	....	....	....	....
15—20	1	2	....	2	1	1	....	1
20—25	....	1	1	....	1	....	....	....
25—35	3	1	....	....	2	1	....	....
35—45	2	....	1	....	....	....	....	....
45—55	1	3	....	....	2	....	....	....
55—65	1	....	....	....	....	1	....	....
65—	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Totals	9	12	5	4	6	4	....	2

MONTHLY INCIDENCE of TUBERCULOSIS.

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec..
2	3	7	2	2	3	—	5	3	2	1	—

PUBLIC HEALTH (Prevention of Tuberculosis) REGULATIONS, 1925.

No person known to be suffering from Tuberculosis is employed in the handling of milk within the area.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

		Males	Females
All Causes .....	.....	108	111
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	.....	.....	.....
Measles .....	.....	.....	.....
Scarlet Fever .....	.....	.....	.....
Whooping Cough .....	.....	.....	.....
Diphtheria .....	.....	.....	.....
Influenza .....	.....	.....	.....
Encephalitis Lethargica .....	.....	.....	.....
Cerebro Spinal Fever .....	.....	.....	.....
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	7	5	
Other Tuberculosis Diseases	0		2
Syphilis .....	.....	.....	.....
General Paralysis of the Insane. Tabes Dorsalis .....	.....	.....	.....
Cancer, Malignant Disease	12	9	
Diabetes .....	.....	.....	3
Cerebral Haemorrhage	3		8
Heart Disease	29	30	
Aneurysm .....	.....	.....	.....
Other Circulatory Diseases	7		7
Bronchitis	2		7
Pneumonia (all forms)	12	7	
Other Respiratory Diseases .....	.....	.....	1
Peptic Ulcer	5		1
Diarrhoea, etc. (under 2 years) .....	.....	.....	.....
Appendicitis .....	.....	.....	2
Cirrhosis of Liver	1		.....
Other Diseases of Liver, etc. .....	.....	.....	.....
Other Digestive Diseases	3		2
Acute and Chronic Nephritis	1		2
Puerperal Sepsis .....	.....	.....	2
Other Puerperal Causes .....	.....	.....	.....
Congenital Debility and Malformation	Premature Birth	10	1
Senility .....	.....	5	7
Suicide .....	.....	2	1
Other Deaths from Violence .....	.....	2	3
Other Defined Diseases	7		11
Causes Ill Defined or Unknown .....	.....	.....	.....

The average age of persons dying in the Borough during the year was 58.

Annual Report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Bridgwater

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1938.

COMPLAINTS.

During the year under revision numerous complaints were received and on investigation 192 were able to be dealt with under the Public Health or Housing Acts. These received attention. This is an increase of 32 in comparison with the figure for 1937.

In the majority of cases the persons responsible for the abatement of the nuisances were interviewed in preference to being served with notices, it being found that this was a far more satisfactory method of getting work promptly placed in hand.

In only 5 cases were Statutory Notices served and in no instance was it necessary to take legal proceedings.

DRAINAGE.

The supervision of all drainage work in respect of existing houses is carried out. During the year a further 10 houses were connected to the sewer in Durleigh Road and the septic tanks previously used were abolished. The drainage systems of 10 houses in Sydenham Causeway have been connected to the new sewer provided to Messrs. Brinton's Carpet Factory.

The drainage systems of 25 houses were relayed and repairs, additions or alterations were tested and inspected in respect of 40 houses.

HOUSING.

General. 281 houses were inspected under the Public Health and Housing Acts, 92 being inspected and recorded under Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925. 245 houses were found to be not in all respects fit for human habitation.

The chief defects found during inspection have been defective or choked drainage, no proper food stores, defective roofs and floors, dirty walls and ceilings, and absence of adequate conveniences.

* **Demolition Orders** were made in respect of 5 houses. All five houses were demolished by the end of the year, in addition to eleven where orders were made in 1937.

Overcrowding. 83 cases of overcrowding were abated during the year, the majority of the families being re-housed on the Hamp Estate, whilst 18 new cases arose. This leaves 18 cases still to be dealt with.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

During 1938 twenty-two cases of premises infested by bed bugs were dealt with. In eleven cases the infestation occurred in Council Houses. One of the chief sources of infestation is still found to be the purchase of second-hand furniture. The infested houses were sprayed with "Killgercide" and fumigated with "Cimex." All the houses were reported clear of bugs after treatment.

Before tenants are removed from condemned houses to Council Housing Estates the whole of the furniture and bedding is fumigated. In no case was it found that vermin had been conveyed to the new house. The work of disinfection is carried out by the Local Authority, a charge being made where the work is done at the request of a private owner.

All Council Houses are inspected to ensure that they are free from bed bugs, special attention being given to those where infestation has occurred previously.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS and MILKSHOPS.

The number of persons retailing milk within the Borough is now 59, a decrease of 1, whilst there are 48 dairies, cowsheds or milkshops, an increase of 1. All the premises were regularly inspected and in connection with these inspections 17 samples of milk were tested for sediment and these proved to be :—

Clean—12 Fair—4 Dirty—1

Some of these samples were taken from persons whose milk had been tested in the previous year and a decided improvement was shown in the cleanliness of the milk. These demonstrations on the cleanliness of milk are very beneficial in ensuring that the milk supply for the town is clean and wholesome.

No. of Producers	...	...	...	...	14
No. of Retailers who are also Producers within the Borough	9				
No. of other Retailers	...	...	...	...	47
No. of Cowsheds	...	...	...	...	14
No. of Dairies	...	...	...	...	25
No. of Milkshops	...	...	...	...	9

Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1936. The quantity of milk sold under licenses granted in connection with the above Order is increasing and it is now possible to obtain T.T., Accredited, and Pasteurised Milk from retailers in the town.

The following licenses were granted during 1938:—

Licence to bottle and retail T.T. Milk	...	...	1
Licence to retail T.T. Milk	...	...	1
Licence to retail Accredited Milk	...	...	2
Licence to pasteurise and retail Pasteurised Milk	...	...	1

Samples of these milks were taken and gave the results hereunder :—

	No. of Samples	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory
Tuberculin Tested	1	1	—
Pasteurised	6	4	2
Accredited	3	2	1
	10	7	3

In accordance with the arrangements made with the Bridgwater Rural District Council to avoid duplication, copies of reports on samples taken by Mr. Callen from premises in the Rural District but from persons retailing within the Borough were forwarded to me. Reports were received as follows :—

	No. of Samples	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory
Tuberculin Tested	4	4	—
Pasteurised	1	—	1
Accredited	3	2	1
	8	6	2

BAKEHOUSES.

The number of bakehouses in the district is 23. These have been inspected, and in three cases notice given to limewash the premises.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS.

The following table gives the results of samples taken for analysis by the Public Analyst. All the samples proved to be free from colouring matters and excess preservatives.

	No. of Samples	Genuine	Not Genuine
Beer	1	1	-
Boracic Powder	1	1	-
Butter	4	4	-
Coffee	1	1	-
Cream	3	3	-
Fish Paste	1	1	-
Flour	1	1	-
Ginger Cordial	1	1	-
Glycerine	1	1	-
Iodine	1	1	-
Jam	2	2	-
Lard	1	1	-
Margarine	2	2	-
Marmalade	2	2	-
Milk	31	24	7
Milk (following-up samples)	9	7	2
Mincemeat	1	1	-
Mineral Waters	1	1	-
Pepper	1	1	-
Sausages	3	3	-
Sweets	2	2	-
Tea	1	1	-
Whiskey	1	1	-
	72	63	9

MEAT AND FOOD INSPECTION.

Slaughterhouses. Fifteen slaughterhouses are in use in the Borough, ten of which are registered and five licensed. This is the same number as last year.

Meat Inspection. The work of meat inspection constitutes a highly important section of my duties and it is pleasing to be able to state that the standard of meat exposed for sale in the shops in the Borough has been well maintained.

Over ten thousand carcases were examined during the year and 13 whole carcases condemned. This gives a percentage of only .13 per cent., which is remarkably low.

The main diseases met with during inspection have been :—beef—tuberculosis; mutton—dropsy and pleurisy; pork—tuberculosis and pleurisy; offal—tuberculosis, cirrhosis, flukes and pyaemia.

In no case has it been necessary to seize condemned meat, the meat concerned being voluntarily surrendered in every instance.

The marking of meat after inspection is not carried out in this district.

Over 2,200 visits were paid to the butchershops and slaughterhouses during the year, and the following table gives the number of carcases examined during the past eight years.

Year	Beef	Pork	Mutton	Veal	Lamb	Total
1931	1231	3401	2827	245	747	8,451
1932	1175	3745	3069	244	837	9,070
1933	1127	3607	3304	230	989	9,257
1934	1210	3564	3270	267	1,116	9,427
1935	1339	3735	3289	289	1,195	9,847
1936	1373	3903	3499	247	1,249	10,271
1937	1413	3853	3295	248	1,051	9,860
1938	1373	3810	3526	264	1,296	10,269

The following tables set out the carcases inspected and condemned :—

TABLE 1. CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle	Cows	Calves	Sheep	Lambs	Pigs
Number Killed	1,253	120	264	3,526	1,296	3,827
Number Inspected	1,253	120	264	3,526	1,296	3,810
All Diseases Except Tuberculosis :						
Whole Carcases condemned	—	—	1	1	1	5
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	24	11	—	32	—	40
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	0.38	9.17	0.38	0.94	0.08	1.18
Tuberculosis Only.						
Whole Carcases condemned	2	—	—	—	—	3
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	26	8	—	1	—	186
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	2.23	6.67	—	0.03	—	4.96

NOTE.—The Sheep shown as having been affected with Tuberculosis had been partly reared on cows' milk.

TABLE 2. MEAT CONDEMNED.

	Beef	Pork	Mutton	Veal
Whole Carcases ...	2	8	2	1
Fore or Hind Quarters	5	2	1	—
Heads ...	3	181	—	—
Other Joints ...	13	12	4	—
Internal Organs ...	82	118	32	—

OTHER FOODS CONDEMNED.

10 lbs. Frozen Lamb Livers.
96 lbs. 5 oz. Tinned Hams.
6 lbs. Jellied Veal.
6 lbs. Tinned Beef.
2 cases of Tins of Prepared Shrimp Paste.
36 lbs. Imported Beef.
4 Rabbits.
2 Fowls.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND DISINFECTION.

Inquiries are made in connection with the notification of cases of infectious disease, with a view to ascertaining the possible source of infection. Any sanitary defects found during such inspections have been remedied.

Disinfection.

Number of houses disinfected ...	26
Wards	17
Sets of Bedding, etc., disinfected	35

TRANSIT OF ANIMALS (AMENDMENT) ORDER, 1930.

In connection with the above Order, all vehicles carrying animals to or from the market have to be cleansed and disinfected before making a fresh journey. The supervision of this work comes under the Health Department. An average of 53 vehicles were dealt with each week, which is a decrease of 11.5 per cent. from the figures for last year.

RATS AND MICE.

I am pleased to report that the work of exterminating rats and mice is consistent with previous years. It is evident that the occupiers of premises infested with these pests still make full use of the facilities provided by the Corporation to rid their premises of the rodents. Thirty-nine premises were cleared of rats or mice during the year. In three cases the infestation proved, on investigation, to be caused through defective drainage. In these cases the drains have been repaired or re-laid. Rat Week was organised from November 7th to 12th and proved quite successful.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936. Sect. 89. INNS.

An inspection of the sanitary accommodation provided at the inns in the district has been carried out, and steps are being taken to have such accommodation made adequate.

SHOPS ACT, 1934.

Further inspections of shops in the Borough have been carried out during the year. As a result of these inspections, the working hours of four junior assistants have been reduced. Twenty-nine notices were served in connection with the keeping of records and the display of the specified forms.

STAFF.

There have been several changes in the staff during the year.

Mr. Cedric Ash, who passed the qualifying examination for Sanitary Inspector in October, 1937, obtained the appointment of Assistant Sanitary Inspector at Gloucester, and took up his new duties in March.

Mr. R. F. Shapter passed the qualifying examination for Sanitary Inspector in April, and was promoted to the position of Additional Sanitary Inspector under the Corporation in July.

The vacancy on the clerical side was filled by the appointment of Mr. Nigel C. M. Pitman, who commenced his duties in April.

FACTORIES.

(1) Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health.

Premises	Number of		
	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories with mechanical power	12	2	—
" without mechanical power	34	1	—
Other Premises under the Act (including works of building and engineering construction but not including outworkers' premises)	1	1	—
Total ...	47	4	—

(ii) Defects Found.

Particulars	Number of defects			Number of defects in respect to which Prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remed'd	Referred to H.M. Inspect'r	
Want of cleanliness	1	1	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences—				
Insufficient	—	—	—	—
Unsuitable or defective	3	3	—	Nil
Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	Nil
Other offences				
(not including offences relating to Home work or offences under the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921 and re-enacted in the Third Schedule to the Factories Act, 1937)	—	—	—	—
Total	4	4	—	—

SUMMARY.

Inspections made during the Year.

General Sanitation.

Drainage	216
Stables and Piggeries	4
Common Lodging Houses	3
Factories	13
Workshops	26
Workplaces	7
Outworkers	—
Public Conveniences	5
Theatres and Places of Entertainment	3
Rats and Mice	88
Smoke observations	—
Shops	170
Miscellaneous	137

Housing.

Houses inspected under Public Health Acts	154
Visits paid to the above houses	351
Houses inspected under Housing Acts	92
Visits paid to the above houses	323
Houses inspected in connection with Overcrowding	1021
Visits paid to the above houses	1052
Vermicious Premises inspected	35
Visits paid to the above premises	56
Miscellaneous	29

Infectious Disease.

Inquiries in cases of Infectious Disease	3
Visits re. disinfection	2
Miscellaneous	1

Meat and Food Inspection.

Visits to Slaughterhouses	2117
" Shops and Stalls	116
" Other premises for meat inspection	1
" Butchers	173
" Fishmongers and Poulterers	2
" Grocers	20
" Greengrocers and Fruiterers	10
" Confectioners	5
" Bakehouses	29
" Fried Fish Shops	12
" Cowsheds	22
" Dairies and Milk Shops	42
" Ice Cream Premises	41
" Restaurants	8
" Street Vendors' Carts	3
Visits in connection with Merchandise Marks Act Sampling	31
" " Milk - Bacteriological	10
" " Milk - Tubercl Bacilli	1
" " Food and Drugs	75
Miscellaneous	29

Explosives.

Visits in connection with explosives	47
" " petroleum spirit	13

Work done.

Complaints investigated	175
Additional water closets provided	24
Additional Wash House provided	—
Additional water taps provided	9
Flush Cisterns provided	1
Scullery Troughs provided	0
Choked drains and sewers cleared	21
Drains relaid	25
Drains repaired	8
Inspection chambers provided	47
Defective water closets repaired	17
,, urinals repaired	—
,, roofs repaired	33
,, windows repaired	40
,, eavessgutters and downpipes repaired	23
,, walls repaired	21
,, plastering repaired	80
,, firegrates and ranges repaired	32
,, coppers repaired	8
,, doors repaired	22
,, chimneys repaired	6
,, ceilings repaired	37
,, flush cisterns repaired or renewed	10
,, washhouses repaired	2
,, scullery troughs repaired or renewed	7
,, staircases repaired	24
,, scullery waste pipes repaired	5
,, floors repaired	52
,, paving of yards repaired	1
Dampness remedied	16
Handrails to stairways provided or repaired	18
Foodstores provided or ventilated	35
Ceilings whitened	108
Rooms distempered or papered	97
Additional windows provided	6
Additional ventilation provided	3
Nuisance from the keeping of Animals abated	1
Foul accumulations removed	8
Overcrowding abated	43
Verminous premises cleansed	32
Premises disinfested from rats or mice	28
Houses cleansed	—
Water closets cleansed	3
Urinals cleansed	1
Sewers relaid	1
Smoke nuisances abated	—
Ditches cleansed or filled in	1

Notices served and complied with.

Preliminary.	Bt. forward from 1937	Served	Complied with	Cd. forward to 1939
Public Health	... 20	80	94	6
Housing	... 12	84	60	36
Shops	... 8	33	37	4
	40	197	191	46

Statutory.

Public Health	... 1	5	5	1
Housing	... 2	—	2	—
	3	5	7	1

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

R. K. LEAN,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

RAINFALL, BRIDGWATER AND ASHFORD PUMPING STATION, 1938.

BRIDGWATER.

No. of days rain fell	150							
The wettest month	August.							
March.	.....						
Greatest fall in 24 hours	1.69 on 18th Sept.							
Month	Total Depth	Greatest fall in 24 hours	Inches	Day	No. of days with 0.01 or more	Total Depth	Greatest fall in 24 hours	No. of days with 0.01 or more
	Inches		Inches	8	20	Inches	8	19
January	3.44	.65				3.27	.75	7
February	1.05	.33	26	8			25	2
March	.10	.08	24	2			24	2
April	.12	.07	22	2			22	2
May	2.29	.42	29	15			29	15
June	1.39	.50	1	10			55	10
July	2.98	.74	14	13			51	10
August	4.41	.76	28	13			61	15
September	2.74	1.69	18	13			71	13
October	2.60	.32	4	17			38	16
November	3.99	.65	25	17			52	17
December	3.11	.45	13	20			56	19
Totals		28.22			150		25.23	145

